

Hardware

What is MAIN MEMORY?

- Where programs and files are stored while the CPU processes them.
- Physically made up of microchips.
- Programs are accessed immediately without being fetched from backing storage.

What is RAM?

- Random Access Memory
- Where programs and files are loaded from backing storage when used by the CPU.
- Contents are erased when the computer is switched off.

What is ROM?

- Read Only Memory
- Where programs and files are permanently stored.
- Contents are placed on chip when made and cannot then be changed.
- Every computer needs at least a little ROM, otherwise the computer would not be able to perform any task on startup.

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What is BACKING STORAGE?

- Where programs and files are stored permanently when not in use by the CPU.
- Needed to store the contents of RAM, which would otherwise be lost.

What factors should be used in comparing backing storage devices?

- How fast data is accessed.
- How much data is to be stored.
- Cost of storage media.
- Whether data has to be changed, added or deleted.
- Portability of data, i.e. can it easily be taken from computer to computer?

What is MULTIMEDIA?

- When a variety of specialised hardware are connected to the computer system at the same time.
- Examples of specialised hardware are video players, CD's and speakers.

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What are SPECIALISED input and output devices?

- Hardware adapted for a particular purpose.
- E.g. to allow a disabled person to use a computer.

What practical purposes are specialised input and output devices used for?

- Visually impaired people can use Braille keyboards for input and have speakers to allow voice output.
- People who cannot use their hands use microphones to allow voice input to type documents.
- Touch screens can allow people to input without the need for lots of typing.

What is VIRTUAL REALITY?

- Where the real world is shown digitally, allowing real-life situations through the use of computers and special hardware.

What hardware is required in virtual reality?

- Special headsets and gloves linked to the computer.

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What do LCD and TFT stand for?

- Liquid Crystal Display
- Thin Film Transistor

What are the advantages of LCD or TFT screens?

- A flat screen, taking up less space.
- Low power usage.